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Tulsa District

NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

To: Editors, News Directors, and Assignment Editors

Synopsis: Reminder that digging of snake root on Corps of Engineers property is prohibited.

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Reminder: Snake Root digging illegal on Corps of Engineers lands

TULSA, Okla. -- Digging of snake root -- or *any* vegetative growth -- on Corps of Engineers property is prohibited, officials with the Tulsa District of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers said today.

In recent years there has been an increased interest particularly in Purple Coneflower, commonly known as snake root. The root of the Purple Coneflower is valued as a herbal medicine and has been the subject of numerous experimental studies ranging from anti-bacterial uses to tissue regeneration.

Due to the recent rekindling of interest, many people have taken up the hobby or profession of digging snake root. Many wild populations have been over harvested by commercial diggers. The digging of the root requires some type of metal tool that reaches deep into the ground to extract the root.

The illegal digging of snake root and other vegetative growth on Corps of Engineers property often occurs in native meadows used for haying purposes. Soil disturbances in these areas result in the destruction of other plant species and soil erosion on steeply sloped areas.

This illegal digging is a violation punishable by a \$200 fine.

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(Note: Snake root is a common local name for the plant which is known as Purple Coneflower. Some localities may have other plants which have been given the snake root name.)